

Federal Funds Will Be Used to Pay for Abortion Under Speaker Pelosi's Government Takeover of Health Care

November 4, 2009

Health care reform should not be used as an opportunity to use federal funds to pay for elective abortions. Health reform should be an opportunity to protect human life – not end it. A [majority of Americans believe](#) that health care plans should not be mandated to provide elective abortion coverage, and a majority of Americans do not believe government health care plans should include abortion coverage. Currently, federal appropriations bills include language known as the Hyde Amendment that prohibits the use of federal funds to pay for elective abortions under the Medicare and Medicaid programs, while another provision, known as the Smith Amendment, prohibits federal funding of abortion under the federal employees' health benefits plan.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) is proposing a 2,032-page government takeover of health care that directs the new government-run plan to cover elective abortions, and establishes an accounting mechanism to justify the federal government subsidizing private plans that cover abortion. Under Speaker Pelosi's plan, [federal funds will be used to pay for the benefits covered under the government-run plan](#) – even if the federal government contracts out the services. The accounting mechanism included in the Pelosi bill requires individuals to pay abortion premiums into a health care trust fund that will be used to pay for the abortion services. According to the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service (CRS), when individuals pay a premium – or private funds – into the U.S. Treasury, the [funds become government or federal funds](#). Furthermore, claims that the Hyde Amendment will apply to the government-run plan are incorrect. The government-run plan will not receive funding through the traditional appropriations process; therefore, the Hyde Amendment does not apply. There is no getting around it: under Speaker Pelosi's government takeover of health care, federal funds will be used to pay for abortions under the government-run plan, and to subsidize individual plans that include abortion.

As an alternative to Speaker Pelosi's bill, House Republicans are offering a common-sense, responsible solution that would reduce health care costs and expand access while protecting the dignity of all human life. The Republican plan, available at HealthCare.GOP.gov, would codify the Hyde Amendment and prohibit all authorized and appropriated federal funds from being used to pay for abortion. And under the Republican plan, any health plan that includes abortion coverage may not receive federal funds.

A Tale of Two Approaches:

	Pelosi Plan	GOP Alternative
Include a government-run plan that includes elective abortion coverage?	YES. The government-run plan is authorized to cover elective abortions.	NO. The GOP plan does not create a government-run plan. It does include language that codifies the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits the use of federal funds to pay for elective abortions.
Use federal funds to pay for	YES. The government-run plan will authorize that federal funds	NO. The GOP plan includes language that codifies the Hyde

elective abortions?	be used to pay for all health benefits including abortion.	Amendment, which prohibits the use of federal funds to pay for elective abortions.
Require private insurance companies to include abortion coverage?	YES. Requires that at least one plan in every insurance market provide abortion coverage. There is also a requirement that at least one insurance option does not include abortion coverage.	NO. The GOP plan does not include benefit mandates.
If I don't want abortion coverage, do I still have to pay for it?	YES. The government-run plan is explicitly authorized to include abortion coverage. Individuals that enroll in the government-run plan will be required to pay a monthly abortion premium to the health care fund at the U.S. Treasury. These federal funds will be used to pay for elective abortion services. Individuals who receive affordability credits can select a private plan through the Exchange that does not include abortion coverage.	NO. There are no benefit mandates in the GOP plan.
Does the plan permit individuals to use affordability credits to purchase abortion coverage?	YES. Allows an individual to use their affordability credit to purchase plans that include abortion coverage.	NO.

The Pelosi Bill Promotes Abortion on Demand

- The Pelosi bill prohibits the Health Benefits Advisory Committee from mandating elective abortion coverage as part of the essential benefits package (*Section 222(e)(1), p. 109*). However, under the Pelosi bill, a person can choose a plan through the Exchange that includes abortion coverage (*Section 222(e)(2), p. 109*) and the Secretary is authorized to determine instances when abortion is allowed under the government-run plan (*Section 222(e)(4), p. 110*).
- A monthly abortion premium will be charged of all enrollees in the government-run plan, as well those who select plans that have abortion coverage through the Exchange. The premium will be paid into an U.S. Treasury account and these federal funds will be used to pay for the abortion services.

- The Pelosi bill describes the process in which the Health Benefits Commissioner is to assess the monthly premiums that will be used to pay for elective abortions under the government-run plan. The Commissioner must charge at a minimum \$1 per enrollee per month (*Section 213(b), p. 97-98*).
- The Congressional Research Service (CRS) concluded that funds in the U.S. Treasury are federal funds, and using federal funds to pay for elective abortions contradicts the Hyde Amendment (*Section 303(e), p. 171-172*).
- The Pelosi bill states that affordability credits may not be used to directly pay plans for abortion services (*Section 341(c)(3), p. 246*). Affordability credits are to be used to purchase health insurance through the Exchange, of which at least one plan in the Exchange must cover abortion.
- The Pelosi bill includes conscience protections for plans that participate in the Exchange that choose to cover or not to cover elective abortions (*Section 304(d), p. 182*). However, at least one plan in the Exchange must include abortion coverage.

Republican Alternative Protects Life

- The GOP plan would codify the Hyde Amendment in statute, no longer subjecting it to the annual appropriations process. The language would prohibit the use of federally authorized and appropriated funds for elective abortions. The GOP plan would also prohibit federal trust fund dollars from being used to pay for elective abortions.
- The GOP plan also includes conscience protections that prohibit government entities from discriminating against health care providers, hospitals, insurance plans and other related entities on the basis that they do not to provide, pay for, provide coverage of, or refer for abortions.

For more information, please visit <http://HealthCare.GOP.gov>.